1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20



881 535 574 [177] appeared at the site. Then several small boys were taken into the ring, some of the girls having several times called out in English, "Join in!" I was struck with the amount of English spoken by Indians in conversing with one another, not only by those of school age, but even by young men of possibly twenty-five to thirty years.

Suddenly, several men entered the ring, which henceforth was apparently enlarged after every intermission. The men were all together in one half of the circle. In the darkness I could not make out precisely how the dancers were holding one another. It seemed that between the first man and the last woman in the ring a slight gap was left so that they never held each other. During these dances the girl with the pole held it aloft—not as in the first dance witnessed—so that it rose something like ten feet above the ground. The step remained uniform—a slow clockwise walk breaking into a lively movement as the dancers warmed up. The women continued to leap; the men rarely jumped, at least did not do it so regularly, rather substituting two quick leftward steps.

At one stage of the performance, a woman appeared within the circle, holding up both hands and approaching the ring of dancers, some of whom seemed to snatch what she was holding in her hands. At one time I also noticed the girl with the pole dancing inside the circle with her companion.

[291] [439] [534] [114] All the dancers were dressed in trade clothes. There was no musical instrument. The dance was to last all through the night, with an intermission for a feast. Not perceiving any new features, I left before midnight.

### MARRIAGE

583 584 About a year or two after her puberty dance a girl would get married. One account makes the suitor ask her father's permission with an offer of buckskin, shell beads, and other gifts. If the parents liked him, they called him to marry their daughter. According to Bill, the families of the prospective bridegroom and bride exchanged gifts, the boy's father bringing dried venison to the household of the bride, whose mother gave mush in return. The giving of presents to the bride's parents is called kumyu'ga, the return gift umlagu"wa'a. This exchange continued for several months. Sometimes a youth and a girl met at a dance and came to live together without parental arrangements. The informant, at first noncommittal about his preference, added: "Catching himself is the wrong way, it looks to me. The parents' giving grub to each other is a pretty good way."

591 Normally, the young couple settled with the bride's family, the bridegroom killing game for his parents-in-law, who wanted to keep their daughter and therefore had the husband stay with them, too. This arrangement lasted during the old people's lifetime. When they died, their house was burnt and the young couple moved. Bill described residence as matrilocal *or* patrilocal, but some of his own statements indicate a preference for the former. Jack's reminiscences support this view. When small, he lived with his parents, his maternal grandparents, and some of his mother's brothers. Oddly enough, he said

● [768]

1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20



587 Though correct, sororate and levirate were not compulsory; Bill explicitly said that the bereaved person might marry anyone else.

606 There was no mother-in-law taboo. An old woman would say to her daughter's husband, "Go, get some water, and we'll cook and eat." Then they would get some wood, and the young man would obey, speaking "good" to his mother-in-law. When he killed game, he brought it home. Then the old woman asked her daughter to cook for her husband, and would be satisfied. A woman might advise her son-in-law, telling him that she was treating him like an own son, would bid him ask her own son whether he wanted to join in looking for game, and so on. According to Dave, fathers-in-law did not lecture their daughters' husbands in this fashion, nor, for that matter, did all mothers-in-law.

607 Brothers-in-law were friendly.

## DEATH

764 According to Barrett,* cremation was formerly customary, whereas nowadays [178] there is burial. Jack did not confirm the first part of this statement, declaring that the Digger Indians burnt corpses whereas the Washo always put them [765] into the ground, interment being by relatives of the deceased. Everyone cried, but there was no hair cutting. If the dead man had fine clothes, they were [302] buried with him. Nowadays, when an Indian dies, his kin buy a coffin; also a [178] good shirt, clothes, and shoes, and put them on the corpse. The family do not wish to stay in the house, but put up a hut on a new site and move there.

[768] Dave, however, gave so circumstantial a statement about cremation that its occurrence, at least among some of the Washo, can hardly be doubted. When an Indian died, he said, an old doctor spoke to the survivors as follows: "Do not bury him, or a wolf or coyote coming along will smell the dead person and eat him. You must not bury him in the ground; burn him up, and pick up what is left of the bones to put them into some creek." All used to dance around the fire and cry. They would put up sagebrush two to three feet high and place [753] the corpse on top. The clothes of the deceased were hidden lest anyone wearing them should fall sick. An old doctor dreamed that people should not wear [787] the dead person's clothing. The Digger Indians when mourning mix ashes and grease to put on the face, which they do not wash for about five months. The Washo did not put anything on the face, but cried continually for three months [765] and did not wash the face for a year. Old men and women cut the hair as close as possible, but the young people did not care. The house where the death oc- [768] curred was not burnt, but abandoned. Sometimes the best-looking property—basketry—was burned with the corpse. The deceased man's bow was broken up and put up in the hills so that no one could use it thereafter.

According to Bill, the Washo sometimes buried and sometimes—but not very often—burned the corpse, putting it on a pile of brush. In the latter event the bones were subsequently interred.

* Barrett, *op. cit.*, 9.

[P. 399, B]

764 [178] [177] this inevitability. It is less than surprising then that changes in attitudes and rituals surrounding death among the Washo have changed very slowly. The only changes which appear to have developed in Washo death customs are those imposed by direct intervention of the whites or as unavoidable consequences of changes in other aspects of the culture.

768 [342] [221] In the past, when a person died the house in which he expired was abandoned by his family. Of course, if the death occurred in the spring or summer such abandonment was simple; during these seasons the Washo usually lived in simple brush shelters. A winter death was a more serious matter; it was during this season that the Washo lived in the gal'sdaq'l—a structure made to last through the winter and until the next winter, when it was reoccupied. Valley Washo often [342] made these winter homes of brush or tules. In the foothills and mountains, bark slabs and tree limbs were utilized. If an occupant died, this home must be abandoned and was often burned down, and the immediate family moved to another campsite. Thus a family which suffered no deaths during the winters might spend several years in a single campground, whereas a less fortunate family might have to move every winter, or even oftener than that.

342 178 [657] A few Washo began building simple rectangular board and batten houses in the 1890's. Most of the others continued to live in gal'sdaq'l made of boards and scrap, begged, stolen, or purchased from the lumber mills which were quite numerous in the area at the beginning of the century. In the 1930's, when most of the Washo moved into the "colonies" established for them by the government, the native-style houses were abandoned in favor of the wooden homes built by the government. No longer permitted to move about the country at will, and frankly unwilling to abandon the more comfortable white-style houses, the Washo adjusted their death customs. The most common adjustment was to prepare for an impending death by shifting seriously ill persons into an adjoining structure, often a shack built in the native manner or a shed or lean-to. This structure could be burned down without loss when its inhabitant died.[7]

764 768 178 [656] [775] The Washo viewed this destruction of a house occupied by a dead person as simply preventing his spirit from bothering the living.

764 [114] Most Washo death customs display a conscious attempt to avoid association with the dead. Barrett reports that cremation was practiced, and the bones placed in a stream to prevent their desecration. However, this appears to have been only one of the disposal customs and is not well remembered by Washo living today. The burning or burying of the personal possessions of the dead was common. Certain prized possessions were interred with the body, which was usually wrapped in a shroud of matting, deerskin, or bearhide and placed in a fissure or cave in the mountains. Although there are a number of locations known by both Indians and local whites as old burying grounds, [177] all my informants agreed that in the "real old days" there was no special cemetery and that these burial spots have developed since the coming of the white man. This may well have been as a result of direct white interference with native funeral customs and an insistence that Indians concentrate their burials. Some of these sites have become traditional among the Washo.

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[7] The willingness of the Washo to send gravely ill persons to the hospital seems in part motivated by the wish to avoid a death in the house.

[P. 378, A]

764 The dispute between the widow and the sister mentioned
[578] earlier was an argument as to whether the deceased would be buried in one of these sites or in the cemetery at Stewart, Nevada.

A white man who has lived in the area for ninety years, reported that as a boy he often came across caches of belongings of dead Indians in the mountains.
[178] Today, prized possessions are either crowded into the casket with the body or burned or secreted in some remote area of the Sierra.

Funeral ceremonies were apparently simple. The body was wrapped and carried into the hills to be interred. Prayers in the form of a short speech were
[782] directed toward the dead. "We are burying you because you are dead. It's not because we are mad at you or don't like you. But you are dead. Please don't come back and bother us."

765 Widows traditionally cut their hair in mourning, a
[302] custom which is still practiced. Stewart reports that mourners painted their faces black. My informants
[178] denied this, but one elaborated: "I remember when I was a little girl old Indians who had lost someone would cry a lot and let the tears run down their faces
764 and not wash their faces until they were real dirty
[626] and black with fire smoke." Crying at a funeral was expected and in fact positively sanctioned. At a funeral conducted while I was present the sheriff arrested a drunken Washo who was wailing quite loudly. The Indians were all bitter about this because: "All of us
[627] cry at a funeral whether we are drunk or not. That's the way the Washo do it." (This funeral was that of a murder victim and the sheriff was present because he feared there might be a reprisal attempt.)

A newspaper report of a funeral in Genoa, Nevada, in the late 1880's records that the Indians had borrowed a wagon from a white man to transport the corpse (that of a well-known Indian woman) to the burying ground. The wagon was followed by a large crowd of weeping mourners.

764 Modern funerals usually take place under the aus-
178 pices of a funeral director, and generally services are performed by a Christian minister from the Stewart
[797] Indian agency. After the white minister has left, it is usual for an older Indian to approach the casket and repeat the old funeral prayers. The reason for waiting until the minister leaves is to avoid hurting his feelings. My informants said the prayers made the
● [768] older Indians feel more comfortable. It is usually not necessary to burn the deceased's home, but his be-
769 longings are disposed of. There is an increasing ten-
178 dency to tend graves and put flowers on them. The cemetery at Stewart appears to be well decorated with flowers. Two old Indian graves near Lake Tahoe are regularly visited and jars of flowers placed on them.[8]

650 When the husband of one of my informants died,

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[648] [8]The concern for these particular graves may be in part motivated by the fact that they are a focal point in a Washo land claim. Because of California law concerning cemeteries, the Indians contend that the tourist camp presently on the site is there illegally and that the land is theirs. Thus far the camp operator has been enjoined from removing or desecrating the graves, but the Indians' claim has not been considered.

764 [P. 378, B] When the husband of one
of my informants died,
768 following a twelve-year illness spent in a secondary
house, she went to visit a daughter living near Lake
178 Tahoe. When she returned to Dresslerville her two
sons had torn down the shed and disposed of all their
father's possessions. In deference to their mother's
rather modern views about funerals, nothing had been
placed in the casket.

768 While I was in Dresslerville an Indian of about
forty put the torch to the house in which his mother
and father had lived. The house had been unoccupied
since their deaths. While the house burned no effort
was made to extinguish the fire or to call the fire
department. A nearby rancher saw the fire and sum-
moned the fire department, but the Indians refused to
tell the firemen how the fire had started. The local
newspaper reported it had been burned to drive away
[776] evil spirits. This upset my informants, one of whom
[775] said that the sight of the house simply made the man
sad. She elaborated that the Washo felt they were help-
[821] ing God wipe out the tracks of a dead person. The
Washo claim that after a death there is always a rain
or sand storm which wipes out the tracks of the de-
ceased.

764 After the Washo return home from a funeral, they
515 immediately wash their faces and hands. They would
783 not feel safe in handling food or children until this
ritual had been carried out.

The behavior of the dead is a matter of concern
775 for most Washo (2606-2609a). Ideally, the spirit is
supposed to go up and to the south where dead Indians
are. This land of the dead is guarded by a number of
men with bows. Some shamans were able to make the
[756] trip to the land of the dead (2541-2544). If they could
[787] elude these guards, they were sometimes able to re-
cover the spirit of a recently dead person and return
it. If, however, the spirit has partaken of the water
of a spring immediately behind the guards, it can never
be recovered. The by-now-familiar uncle of my inform-
ant once visited the land of the dead and reported that
there were lots of Indians there playing games and
having a good time. If murder victims were present
they were with the celebrants, but the spirits of the
killers were segregated and were not having a good
time.

Ghosts, however, wander over the land. They are
generally malevolent. If they feel they have been badly
used in life, or are not properly honored after death,
[768] or have not been given the things they wanted when
buried, they may wreak vengeance on the living. To pre-
[782] vent this, homes were abandoned, prayers were said, and
names of the dead were not used. In discussing a recent
[551] murder, one of the most progressive of the Washo was
extremely reluctant to give the name of the victim, and,
when she finally did, she whispered it. One of the diffi-
culties encountered by government agents when pine-nut
[648] lands were allotted to the Washo was a refusal to name
[551] the ancestors on whom the allotment claim was based.

Ghosts are often said to come in the form of whirl-
winds or dust devils, and most Washo will avoid look-
[821] ing at a whirlwind. At night, a sudden puff of warm
air is thought to be a ghost passing nearby.

14. (8) In the other galis dangal lived Jack's youngest wife, her daughter, the mother of the three wives, and a related family consisting of a man (D¢beh¢¢sh, "gun shooter"), his wife, and three girls that walked down from Loyalton because "this galis dangal needed a man too." 592 596

15. (8) Shortly after Little Josie, her husband (Damtanga), three girls, and her mother moved to Truckee, her mother died so the family tore the galis dangal down. "Little Josie had her man make the new galis dangal big and four men worked together on it. Then her husband froze to death while hunting. She stayed in that galis dangal for about another year. She was glad to leave it when she married Budish and they built a new galis dangal over the hill." Budish brought a son (Ishin) by a previous marriage into the house. [768] [165] [587]

Little Josie's oldest daughter (Minnie Truckee) was not married, but she had a half breed "railroad daughter." The middle daughter (Josie) had a Washo husband (Jim Winters) in Reno and a son and daughter living with her. The youngest daughter, her White husband, and their three or four children lived in a separate cabin some distance from the galis dangal. [848] [361]

The mean number of occupants in these fifteen galis dangal is seven while the range is from three to thirteen. The number for any single galis dangal varied from season to season when the men and often the whole family moved to Lake Tahoe to fish, hunt, and gather plants. The Washo in the town of Truckee around 1900 worked at menial tasks for the Truckee Hotel or the saw-mills and peddled the fish and game they caught to the White residents. Washo baskets were just beginning to be sold as curios to the Whites and probably not more than a dozen were made for sale in any given year of that period. [162] [221] [439]

## Some Historical Considerations

History begins in the Washo territory comparatively late. We have no definite information on the presence of Whites in Washo territory prior to 1826. The Spaniards had been in California, primarily along the coast, sometime previous to this, but their contact is questionable and their influence was extremely meager. 175

The decade of the 1850's was for the Washo a period of the most rapid cultural and environmental change they have ever experienced. In those few years the White intruders displaced the Washo and changed their environment sufficiently to require them to depend upon the former for survival (Fairfield 1916; James 1921). [177]

In the early 1900's the Washo used the word "kavayo" for horse, which is related to the Spanish term, but this term seems to have been borrowed from 175 177 492

and slightly roasted in hot sand. This would form a sort of rouge stick. It was also applied on previously greased skin. 302 384

The yellow (waltsatsini) and black (wɬlyauwi) pigments were mixed with fat or grease. Black came from a mineral, powder, or soot. These colors stayed on only a short time, the black an hour or two and the yellow slightly longer.

The white pigment (dipɬk) was a chalk mixed with water that would stay about as long as the black. One place this was gathered was in the south central end of Carson Valley. [317]

One design for war was red all over and then 1/2 black and 1/2 white over that. This was thought to make the warrior partially invisible. When the tribe divided for games the west side (tanglelɬl tayadi) would paint their faces red, braid their hair, and would not wear a feather. The east side (paolelɬl tayadi) used white face paint and wore an eagle feather in their hair. [726] [789] [616] [526]

## Houses

Ingalls (1913, 23) wrote "They are more filthy than beasts, and live in habitations which, summer and winter, are nothing more than circular inclosures, about five feet high, without roof, made of artemisia or sage-brush, or branches of cedar thrown around on the circumference of a circle, and which serve only to break the wind. As the temperature in winter must at times be as low as zero, it will be perceived they must suffer considerably. Anything like a covered lodge, or wick-e-up of any sort, to protect them from rain, cold or snow, Captain Simpson did not see among them." 342 [181] [132]

The root for house in Washo is angal. The winter house is galis dangal, the sweat house is tashmangal, and the brush blind and fishing house is ma?angal. The Washo also built a summer or temporary shelter (gadu) and a summer shade (ta?a). [192]

The galis dangal (Plate V,A) literally means "winter house", but it was used the year around or left in the summer and returned to in the winter. If it had been built by a family one winter and the next summer someone of the family died while at Lake Tahoe or elsewhere away from the galis dangal, the family would return sometime that year to the galis dangal to tear it down, leaving everything to rot. A less common alternative was to burn the dwelling. The deceased would be buried wherever he died. The practice was to tear the building down when a member of the family who had lived in it died, even if the death did not occur within the house. In recent years it became the [768] [754] [178]

custom to leave the house standing regardless of where the person dies, although the house may be temporarily abandoned and purified with smoke from sagebrush or juniper (Freed and Freed n.d.).

The galis dangal was the only house the Washo made that was used for more than a few months. A galis dangal may be made by a family and used by that family for several years, although they might only sleep in it in the winter. It would be used in the summer for storage or to sleep in on rainy nights. A gadu or ta?a were often built right next to a galis dangal for summer use.

During the beginning of pinenut gathering, if one had not already been built, the family would gradually bring in material for a galis dangal and build one. The construction itself would take most of the family's spare time from gathering and other necessary activities for about a week. Often neighbors would help. The house would be gradually improved and repaired for the length of it's use with certain features, such as a packed clay floor or a windbreak for the smoke hole, added perhaps years after its initial construction.

A spring was considered the most desirable location because the water there would not freeze over in the winter as a stream would. Another consideration for the location of a galis dangal was the location of one's pinenut picking grounds. The sunny side of a hill was also preferred.

There was a great amount of variation in the construction and materials used in the galis dangal; however, a few generalizations can be made. There was always a smoke hole in the center of the roof. The door always faced east, just as it does today in most old Washo houses. Bertha Holbrook, Hank Pete, Roy James, George Snooks, and Suzy Dick all think of the east entrance of their houses as the front door regardless of the fact that the road may be on the west side of the house. Roy James said that this was to avoid the strong wind from the west. One reason for this custom seems to be that Washo refer to the sun and to the east for orientation. The puberty ceremony is all oriented to the east.

The galis dangal was usually round and ranged in diameter from about ten to twenty feet, depending upon the number of occupants it was built for and the availability of long poles in the vicinity. Another factor that determined the size of the galis dangal was the practice of sleeping with the head toward the wall and the feet toward the fire. With the fireplace in a center pit (about three inches deep), with a ring of rocks under the smoke hole, and the difficulty of building a large house, the optimum size was about 12 to 15 feet in diameter.

The door opening (itpasua) was from 3 to 5 feet in height and from 2 to 3 feet in width. The door (iombisuk) was covered with an old rabbit skin

344 was performed (Dangberg n.d.). This eight sided structure and the nine
177 sided "round house" built around 1940 by Ben Lancaster for meetings of
[668] the Native American Church near Coleville, California were innovations and not part of traditional Washo architecture.

## Property and Inheritance

423 Washo groups had no communal property beyond the land they lived on and its resources. Some joint ownership of property occurred however. The kin group's common rights in specific pinenut picking grounds (dimasha) and eagle nests (pataimi m¢gi) are a form of joint property. Steward (1938, 256) described family ownership of pinenut groves among the Owens Valley Paiute, a rarity within the Great Basin.

The Washo thought of themselves as co-users of the territory along with the plants, animals, and a host of supernaturals. The rights of these other users had to be respected. Individuals or households could establish semi-permanent exclusive rights over specific locations for use purposes. A fish blind constructed over a deep place along a stream established the right of the person or household that had constructed it to fish in that
[425] area. When the fish blind was abandoned for the season anyone else could use it; but the person who made the fish blind had established a right to return to that spot the following year.

422 Food or manufactured goods could be used or exchanged, but not destroyed.
[782] The exception to this was ceremonial disposal where there was a ritual requirement to destroy the goods (see p.47). Also individuals who infringed upon others' traditional pinenut picking grounds may have their baskets and
[685] other gathering equipment destroyed for them by the rightful owners of that picking ground.

A connection was believed to obtain between the objects and the persons who made them. In Washo society every manufactured object was personalized
[768] in this way. The intimate connection between objects and persons is seen in the abandonment or destruction of the goods a deceased individual had
[431] made, even if the goods had been given to someone else. In a sense, the maker always maintained partial ownership in any objects he produced.

621 Each Washo local group owned for use-purposes the hunting territory,
423 fishing streams, and springs that it actually used. If the members of a cluster of cooperating households regularly hunted in a certain area, their right to exclusive hunting in that area emerged over time. Informants say that a person had a theoretical right to hunt anywhere, but in practice he hunted in a fairly limited area. This was in part due to the accessibility of the hunting area with regard to a group's habitual wintering grounds. It was also due to the intimate knowledge that a hunter gains of a limited section of the total hunting territory. But it also derived from the concept of local group prerogatives, and the necessity to receive permission when intruding upon recognized sub-territories.

Pinenut pickinggrounds and eagle aeries were owned for exclusive use purposes by kinship groups. It appears that these traditional forms of private ownership developed as an institutionalization of the personalization of property and rights obtained through use.

Inheritance is a transfer of ownership from a deceased person to a living person or persons. It is based on a pre-existing relationship between the deceased and his successors, is personal, and usually traditional (Hoebel 1958, 458). Generally in primitive societies inheritance of chattel goods follows the sexual division because the distinction between men and women's goods is so complete. Also land tenure is generally communal with some kinship and residence group modification.

Among the Washo the complete destruction of a person's goods at his death precludes inheritance of chattel property. Real estate is essentially communal and for the tribe, inalienable. Hank Pete said that when "Captain Jim" (Gumalanga) received two sacks of flour for the land around the present town of Genoa, Nevada from John Reese in 1851 he had no concept of alienating the land. John Reese thought he had bought land while Captain Jim thought he had merely received a gift in exchange for providing the strangers temporary use of lands.

Though modification of the communal nature of real estate came in the case of pinenut groves and eagle aeries, this modification is not subject to inheritance in the full sense. It is more a heritage by virtue of birth, rather than inheritance by virtue of death. There was, for example, no transfer of ownership of eagle nests when a person died; individuals, however, referred to their relationship with the deceased in order to reaffirm their rights to the baby eagles.

## Division and Specialization of Labor

Division of labor within the household called for the women to do the general gathering of seeds, nuts, roots, berries, and insects. The women cooked, made baskets, and tended the children. The men hunted, carried water, gathered firewood, prepared the skins, and made most of the clothing, fiber cords, rabbit skin blankets, rabbit nets, and hunting and fishing gear. Men and women both gathered pinenuts, fished, and worked in the construction of houses. This division of duties was not rigid so that each sex knew and participated in activities of the other sex.

Division of labor by age was related to ability and the development of skills. Soon after a child began to walk he was given small tasks to do and ability and responsibility was expected to increase gradually with age. By puberty the individual was a full contributor to the household. With old age the more sedentary crafts such as basketry and net making were emphasized.

involved in production was partially lost in distribution because of the communal pooling for use purposes of food, clothing, and shelter. That pooling was not complete is evidenced in the fact that all products made by a deceased person were destroyed. Also clothing and implements were personal belongings and individually owned to a considerable degree.

The older people were the major authority figures as long as they were economically influential. With skill and experience they led their households and communities in every phase of life. However, older people who became an extreme burden on the household because of blindness or other disabilities were deserted and left to die. There are indications that this desertion was met with resignation on the part of the old person and with grief by the family, but was deemed inevitable. A corollary to this was the belief that persons acquired often dangerous supernatural powers with age (cf., Freed and Freed n.d.). Thus, well intentioned gifts from grandparents to grandchildren may be inadvertently harmful.

Generally everyone ate at the same time with the major meal often in the late afternoon. Producing men ate the most and producing women came next. Non-producing old people and children were resented for their supposedly great appetites and in practice probably ate much less than the others. Old people and children were often given the boiling stones and stirring sticks to lick off the cooked meal. Dangberg (n.d., 30) indicates that children were often fed rabbit brains, which adults did not prefer. Mothers prechewed solid foods for infants.

Familial sharing was extended beyond the household primarily through hospitality to visitors. In times of hunger whole households without food might move in with relatives or even unrelated neighbors. In this case private property such as cooking utensils were not pooled, but the food was shared. The two groups living together would cook separately. The guests would be expected to gather wood, bring in water, go hunting, and make what contribution they could.

There were starvation (bisha basha) times, particularly in the late winter, when the household would hide its food, even from relatives. Hank Pete said he heard of starving people who would tear apart their rabbit skin robes to chew the fat off the hides and divide a chipmunk between a whole family. It is said that people could go for ten to fifteen days without eating. Women would give their portions to the men and children because it was believed the women could go longer without eating. A different inventory of foods was used that would never be eaten in ordinary times.

If no young or old people were around to receive them, the heart and liver of a deer, antelope, or rabbit were thrown away. The fetus of an animal and the eggs of scavenger birds were never eaten. Coyote, lizard, snake, frog, and eagle meat were also taboo. When a person died all of his personal belongings were abandoned or destroyed. The home of the deceased was torn down or burned. Food produced by the deceased was destroyed or traded off for other food. One informant said that even clothes made by the deceased and given to another person were often destroyed.

Downs (1961, 375) wrote that, "Few, if any, Washo activities do not contain an element which we can describe as religious, supernatural, or magical." The present writer has a similar impression, but it is difficult to attempt a reconstruction of the role of religion in economy since the data on this subject are so fragmentary today. Economic distribution related to the supernatural, such as the instances of ceremonial disposal described above, appears to be the most intimate, "primary" form of distribution. The importance of the supernatural side of the Washo world view is seen in the mythology collections by Dangberg (1927) and Lowie (1939).

## Gambling

Gambling (gawa) provided the most competitive basis for exchange among the Washo. It was more competitive than trade and was antithetical to the ideal of sharing. Teams that gambled and won together divided the winnings, but the competition between teams was intense and not necessarily proportionate to the value of the objects wagered.

The Washo would bet on any game or competition. Foot races (guml¢sh◊¢sh) for four, five, or six miles were a favorite subject of wagers. Bets were made on the outcome of the men's football game or the women's stick and rope game. Usually the players themselves would bet. Archery, a ring and pin game, a rock-toss game (umlalate), a quoit game, and wrestling were all the subjects of betting. Sometimes the wager would involve only a hit on the head or hand, but often the stakes would get high, requiring payment of baskets, eagle tail feathers, jewelry, buckskins, or even a rabbit skin blanket.

The favorite gambling games were those involving the manipulation of small sticks or bones, the hand games (hinaya when played by women and hinayaugi when played by men), stick games (sigaya), dice games, and basket games. These games were often major social events in themselves involving teams of players and dozens of spectators. The men and women always played separately. The games also involved chants, foot stamping, and other tactics to throw the opposing team off. Today men and women gamble together and the hand games have been replaced by card games.

dance gave a reason for its omission, such as her attendance at a government boarding-school. In general, the ceremony is scrupulously observed. The modern ceremony is a modified version of the old one. The girl no longer climbs a mountain; she climbs a small hill. An automobile is waiting for her when she returns; she wears her slip when she is being bathed instead of being naked as was formerly the custom; she abstains from meat for only two weeks instead of a month; the second dance is usually omitted. Yet the essentials of the ceremony are maintained; and this is in the face of the teasing to which the Indian girl is exposed from her white schoolmates, for the public puberty ceremony makes her a conspicuous social object at the time of her first menses.

Marriages were celebrated with a minimum of ceremony. The most desirable Washo marriage was one arranged by the parents of the bride and groom. Such a marriage was preceded by an exchange of presents. To refuse a present was to reject the prospective bride or groom. Following the exchange of gifts, the new couple began to live together without further ceremony (Curtis, 1926, p. 97; Lowie, 1939, p. 308). The exchange of presents was optional, and occasionally a boy and girl would live together without the benefit of parental arrangements (Barrett, 1917, p. 9; Lowie, 1939, p. 308). Perhaps arranged marriages were never very frequent or else the custom began to die out very early, for in my interviews I found only two arranged marriages out of a total of forty-eight. Today, most people marry in the "tribal" manner, that is, they just begin to live together. Even those few who have purchased marriage licenses usually neglect to go to a justice of peace to complete the ceremony officially.

Curtis (1926, p. 97) says that the dead were formerly cremated. Lowie (1939, p. 310) and Barrett (1917, p. 9) confirm this but add that, by the time they studied the Washo, burial had replaced cremation. Following cremation, the Washo collected the bones of the dead person and placed them in a creek. The clothes and personal property of the deceased person were burned or hidden and the house he used was abandoned. The old men and women cut their hair and mourned for three months (Lowie, 1939, p. 310).

Modern funerals retain many Indian practices. Chief among them are the customs intended to make sure that the ghost of the dead person does not return to trouble the living. Before the body is lowered into the grave, an old man steps forward and makes a speech instructing the ghost to stay away. All of the dead person's property that can be buried is interred with him. Personal property must be destroyed, for this is the "road" by which the ghost of the dead can return and trouble the living.

## RELIGION AND CURING

The shaman was the principal religious figure. He possessed supernatural power (wegeléyu) which he received in dreams and which he learned to control during an apprenticeship of several years under an experienced shaman. A shaman could use his power either to cure sickness or to kill. Supernatural power could come from the deer, rattlesnake, "water-baby" (a small, white, manlike creature which lived in streams, springs, and lakes), bear, and eagle. The Washo call both the sources of power and the power itself wegeléyu.

## Descent and Inheritance

Descent is basically bilateral. Because personal property is destroyed at death and houses are torn down and abandoned, they cannot be inherited. Plots of pinenut trees are privately owned and are inherited bilaterally. The plots are marked by lines of stones. If an individual is discovered gathering in the wrong plot, the owner may take the intruder's pinenuts and break the implements he used. A person has the right to pick in his spouse's plot, but this right terminates at the death of the spouse. Barrett (1917) writes that each village has a hereditary chief, teŭbčýŭ (Barrett's transcription), and that the office passes from father to son. Lowie (1939), on the other hand, says that one of his informants reported a teŭbčýŭ for all the Washo; but he comments that this is probably a recent development. His informants did not know whether the chief inherited from his father. Our informants, as well as Lowie's, mention chiefs (teŭbčýŭ) who, in aboriginal times, would call people together on ceremonial occasions and address them, telling them to behave properly. These chiefs had no authority beyond their ceremonial functions; there is no evidence concerning the possible inheritance of the office. Special headmen led the communal rabbit, antelope and deer hunts. According to Barrett (1917), the rabbit chief inherits his office, but Lowie (1939) says he is chosen by the people. Two of our informants, Nancy Emm and Roy James, say the rabbit chief inherited from his father. The antelope chief is a shaman who dreams the right to his office. Shamans do not inherit their positions. Any able hunter is the leader of a communal deer hunt (Barrett, 1917, 9, 12; Lowie, 1939, 303). Inheritance among the modern Washo is bilateral. Family names may be inherited from either the father or mother. Some of the marriages contracted by the younger Washo are of very brief duration, and in this circumstance the child often takes the family name of the mother. The offspring of more permanent unions take the father's name.

## Family, Moiety, and Local Group

The nuclear family was the basic unit of aboriginal Washo social organization. The Washo practiced polygyny and therefore had some polygynous families. Whether the polygynous families ever reached a frequency of 20%, a figure that Murdock (1949, 28) uses to distinguish between societies with polygynous families and those with monogamous families, cannot be determined because polygyny is now prohibited by law and the Washo no longer practice it. According to our informants, the aboriginal Washo family was nuclear; none of the published sources contains contrary evidence. The modern Washo family is nuclear, but it sometimes includes a few other relatives.

881 dance they mix food with sagebrush and you spit it out. You wear a slip and
178 they dump water on you early in the morning." Her mother talked to her about the dance and said they have it because the Indians always had it.

In summary, the women under 30 mentioned the embarrassment of bathing and the taboos as unpleasant; but they enjoyed the prestige of a big party. Another unpleasant feature mentioned by Holbrook was the teasing the girls undergo at school, for their fasting and the preparations for the dance announce their condition to all. However, the youngsters themselves made no mention of this. The women 30 and over referred to the dance as a pleasant occurrence in their lives and as an event that was expected in the life of every girl. It seems likely that a woman's memories of the dance become more pleasant as she grows older. Since it is the older women who sponsor the puberty dance, its survival seems assured for the immediate future.

## Ceremonies at Death

764 Funeral rites were not elaborate. The dead were formerly cremated, according to Curtis, Barrett and Lowie. When Lowie and Barrett studied the Washo, burial had replaced cremation. Stewart's informants reported only burial. Hank Pete volunteered the information that the dead were never cremated, but we believe this indicates only that the early settlers and missionaries had frowned so severely on cremation that the Washo had abandoned it and were reluctant to talk about it. At the funeral an old person of either sex stepped forward and made a speech instructing the ghost of the dead to stay away and not bother the living. The relatives cried and wailed continually and were joined in this lamenting by other spectators. Holbrook considers the amount of crying in Washo funerals uite noteworthy, apparently in contrast to white funerals. Lowie (1939, 310) says that the corpse was cremated on a
765 pile of sagebrush with the mourners crying and dancing around the fire. The bones were picked up and put in a creek. The mourners cried continually for three months and did not wash their faces for a year. One of Lowie's informants said there was no hair cutting and another said that old people cut their hair as close as possible. Stewart reports that the mourners didn't wash, abstained from gambling, cut their hair, and didn't remarry for one year.
764 The period of mourning terminated with a bath. Lowie says that the house of
[768] the deceased was abandoned, some of his property hidden, and some burned with him. Curtis (1926, 97) says the deceased was cremated by burning his house.

764 The modern Washo bury their dead. The mourners cry and wail as
178 formerly, and an old person still makes a funeral speech. The personal
[768] property of the deceased is buried with him and his house is abandoned. The

The

funeral speech, the destruction of property, and the abandonment of the house are all connected with a belief in ghosts who can cause sickness for their living relatives. Property is the "road" by which the ghost can return from the land of the dead. Its destruction prevents the return of the ghost (Freed and Freed, 1963). Houses are not destroyed for they are too valuable, but tney are abandoned for a time and purified by smoking with sagebrush before reoccupancy. We did not observe any hair cutting for funerals. Holbrook says that the first thing people must do on returning to their homes from a funeral is to wash their faces. Thus it is doubtful if the year's prohibition on washing the face is still maintained, but we have no testimony on this point with regard to mourners. The name of the dead is permanently taboo, as it was formerly. The modern Washo funeral often takes place immediately after a Baptist service held by a white missionary in the Dresslerville church.

## The Shaman's Curing Rite

The Shaman's curing rite is described in some detail in Freed and Freed (1963) and so only a summary will be given here. The shaman cured diseases by means of supernatural power. If the disease was caused by a ghost, the shaman identified the ghost and the property it had traveled on. He then told the patient either to get rid of the property or to treat it properly. If the disease was due to the intrusion of a foreign body into the victim either through sorcery or because the victim had mistreated food such as pinenuts, the shaman sucked out the object causing the disease. The shaman used a variety of implements in his curing, some of which represented the sources of his power. A tubular bone pipe, tobacco, and a cocoon rattle were used by all shamans. The eagle feather was frequently used, for the eagle was a potent source of power for many shamans.

The curing ceremony was held each night for four nights in the home of the patient before a crowd of spectators. The shaman prayed to his power, sang songs received from it, smoked and blew smoke on the patient, shook his rattle and walked about. He alternated these activities until about midnight on the first three nights of the ceremony and continued until dawn on the fourth night. On the morning after the fourth night everyone took a bath to conclude the ceremony. At some time during the ceremony the shaman had a vision that told him whether or not the cure would be successful.

The modern curing rite is apparently similar in all its essentials to the aboriginal one. Minor changes have occurred. Cigarettes are used instead of a tubular stone pipe; the ceremony is sometimes shortened to two nights; and the shaman no longer goes into a trance, vomits out the disease object, paints the patient, or brushes away the disease as reported by Stewart (1941, 413-14).

764
768 A fourth culture pattern in which ghosts play a part is the disposal of the dead. Two features of funerals are connected with the fear of ghosts. First, all the property of the dead person is destroyed and his house is torn down and the parts scattered. Second, at the time the body is cremated or buried an old man steps forward and makes a long speech in which he tells the ghost of the dead person to stay away and not bother the living. With modifications the Washo observe these customs today. Houses are no longer destroyed after a death for they are too valuable, but they are temporarily abandoned. Before the house is re-occupied it is smoked with sagebrush or juniper. Cremation is not practiced; the modern Washo bury their dead.

857
888 Some features of child-rearing patterns are related to supernatural
754 power and the fear of ghosts. The fact that the aged may inadvertently bewitch people affects their relations with children. Mothers try to keep their babies out of the sight of old people who are unrelated. Pete says that to give food to a child was especially dangerous. Small children lived in the house next to Hank Pete and his wife; these children were Pete's sister's daughter's son's children, but they were not related to Pete's wife. Pete's wife never gave them anything to eat. Even older relatives could be dangerous unintentionally. Pete said they would pray to water not to make their relatives of the third descending generation sick when they gave them something to eat. Bertha Holbrook's daughter who lived with her had several young children. We spent many afternoons in Holbrook's house, but never saw any unrelated children playing with the Holbrook children. Bertha remarked that the Washo don't like to have their children going to other houses to play. She said that if her grandchildren do go to other houses, she likes to go with them to make them behave. Although she never spoke of the fear of old people as a factor in children's visiting patterns, we think that this fear may be the reason children play chiefly with relatives.

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775 Another feature of Washo child rearing is that parents seldom physically punish their children. Hank Pete explains that if a person beat his child a dead relative of the child, through the other parent, might become angry and kill the child. Then the child would become a ghost and kill his parent. Pete told a story of a family fight in which a man treated his son very roughly. The son took sick and a shaman diagnosed the trouble as being caused by the anger of the boy's dead relatives. The boy died; then the man sickened and he too died because the ghost of the child killed him. No other Washo ever volunteered this explanation. However, we once asked Rupert if he had ever handled a case like this. He said he had not, but that he had heard of such cases from older people and he confirmed Pete's explanation.

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778 Hunting is another culture pattern in which supernatural power is involved. Such power is used only in deer and antelope hunting. One use in

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[824] Suicide was sometimes accomplished by eating Western Water Hemlock (dime? dé'gul).[6] Hank Pete related a modern double suicide. "Up at Coleville at a rodeo a young lady killed herself with a pistol in the head when she was refused money by her grandmother. The mother of the girl killed herself when she heard about her daughter. They saw her going down to the river. They thought she was going to jump in. Instead, she ate some wild parsnip that grows there. It took her about an hour and a half to die. That's the only time I've heard of Indian suicide. There have been a lot of killings."

764
There was a great amount of variation in disposing of the dead. They could be left where they fell if they died away from camp, buried, cremated, put up in a tree, in a hollow log, or left in the house where they died. The most common means seems to have been burial with the body extended. A trench big enough for the body and about 2 to 3 ft. deep was dug with digging sticks. Baskets were used to place the dirt to one side. The body was prepared by male relatives, but any person could do the job. The body was laid flat on its back. Some of the property of the deceased and gifts of food were laid in with him. The whole was covered over with dirt and a pile of stones. The deceased was dressed in his own clothes and wrapped in his own blanket. Harry Hawkins, an elderly white resident from Woodfords, California, said he often saw the Washo wrap the deceased in a bearskin robe for burial. The remainder of the property of the deceased was broken up and thrown away, or burned. Those who participated in the burial would wash themselves afterward.

● 768
764 The house of the deceased was usually torn down and left to rot. It was occasionally burned, sometimes with the deceased and his property inside. The latter practice was more common during the winter when the hard ground and snow prohibited burial.

764
Hank Pete (born about 1884) told of a winter burial he saw as a youth. "They burned out the stump of a tree and dragged the body there and wrapped him up in some hide and got willows to tie him up and put him in there. His legs were in the hole and his head was up. He froze there. Later they saw the magpies were after him so they threw brush and rocks on top of him."

Lewis (1939, 310) related that "All used to dance around the fire and cry. They would put sagebrush two to three feet high and place the corpse on top. The clothes of the deceased were hidden lest anyone wearing them
[765] should fall sick. . . . According to Bill, the Washo sometimes -- but not very often -- burned the corpse, putting it on a pile of brush. In the latter event the bones were subsequently interred."

6. Literally "water sweet potatoes", Cicuta douglasii. (Juanita Schubert, personal communication)

4: Stewart E-5 (1936) 1941 NR13 Northern Paiute NR13
Washo NT20
Achomawi NS5

NWA 764

ANTHROPOLOGICAL RECORDS

| | | Pa | K1 | K2 | Kn | To | Te | Pa | Wa | At | Sa | Yg | Wd | K3 | Al |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2399. Purified by washing | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | + | – | + | – | – |
| 2401. | Burial | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2402. | Body extended | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | – |
| 2404. | Head in any direction | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | – |
| | 2404a. West | – | – | – | – | – | + | – | – | – | + | + | + | – | – |
| 2406. | In rocks | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | + | + | + | + | + | – |
| | 2407. Rock covering | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | – |
| 2408. | In earth | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | + | – | – | – | – |
| 2410. | In mountain | + | + | + | + | – | – | – | – | + | – | + | + | + | – |
| 2412. | Cremation | – | + | + | – | + | + | + | – | + | – | + | – | + | + |
| 2413. | All deceased | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | + |
| 2416. | Witches | – | + | + | + | – | + | + | – | + | – | + | – | + | – |
| 2417. | Cremation in house | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 2418. | In pyre | – | – | + | + | – | + | + | – | + | – | + | – | + | + |
| 2419. | On pyre | – | – | + | + | – | + | + | – | + | – | + | – | + | + |
| 2420. | Bones buried afterward | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | + |
| 2421. | Funeral speech by old man | – | + | – | + | – | + | + | + | + | – | + | – | – | – |
| 2422. | Relatives cry | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2423. | Gifts to deceased | + | + | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | + | + | + | + |
| 2425. | Destruction of property | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2425a. | House torn down, moved | + | – | + | – | – | – | + | + | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 2426. | House burned | + | + | – | + | + | + | + | – | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2427. | Other property burned | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2428. | Other property buried | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2429. | Some taken by relatives | + | + | + | + | – | – | + | – | + | + | – | – | + | + |
| 2431. | Deceased children and adults treated alike | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| | **Mourning** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2432. | Female relatives crop hair | + | + | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2433. | Burn hair clippings | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 2433a. | Bury hair clippings anywhere | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | + | – | – | + | – | – | – |
| 2434. | Throw away hair clippings | – | + | – | – | + | + | + | – | + | + | – | + | + | + |
| 2437. | Gash legs | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | + | – | + | – |
| 2438a. | Smear faces | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | + |
| 2439. | Abstain from washing | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | – | – | – | + |
| 2440. | Months before remarriage: any number | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | + | + | – | – |
| | 2440a. 12 or more | + | + | + | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | – | + | + |
| 2441. | Male relatives crop hair | + | + | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2442. | Burn hair clippings | + | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 2443. | Throw away hair clippings | – | + | – | – | + | + | + | – | + | + | + | – | + | + |
| 2444. | Abstain from gambling (months): up to 3 | – | + | + | – | + | – | + | – | – | – | + | + | + | – |
| | 2444a. 3-12 | – | – | – | – | – | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | + |
| 2446. | Abstain from washing | – | – | – | – | – | + | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | + |
| 2447. | Months before remarriage: any number | – | – | – | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | + | + | – | – |
| | 2447a. 12 | + | – | + | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | – | – | + | + |
| | 2447b. 24 | + | – | + | – | + | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 2448. | Mourning terminated by mourner washing | – | – | – | – | – | – | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | + |
| 2450. | Taboo on name of dead | + | – | – | – | + | + | – | + | + | – | + | + | – | + |
| 2451. | Permanent | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | + | + | – | – | + | – | + |
| 2452. | Only in presence of kin | – | – | – | – | – | + | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| | 2453. Annual Mourning Ceremony | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | • | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| | **RELIGION** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | **Shamanism (poha'g'ami)** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2469. | Male shamans (mana pohari) | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 2470. | Female shamans (moroni pohari) | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |

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[p. 412]